

In her time serving as my chief of staff, Mela has been an invaluable partner. No matter the situation, my office has been able to rely on her strong leadership and fierce advocacy for getting the job done. She has been a consummate professional, ably navigating the various issues we've faced with grace and dignity.

It's no exaggeration to say that our success over the past three years can be directly attributed to Mela's knack for finding talent. In fact, every single member that currently works on Team Slotkin in our D.C. office was interviewed and hired by Mela.

Now, as Mela gets ready to embark on her next chapter as Secretary Lloyd Austin's deputy chief of staff, I wanted to take a moment to recognize her on the floor of the People's House with tributes from the team that she has led for the past three years.

When asked to sum up the essence of Mela, most of my staff pointed to her strong work ethic and her ability to stay calm, cool and collected under pressure. They talked about her leading by example and seeing no job too large or too small. They also mention her deep compassion toward the people we serve and her thoughtful and skillful communication.

Those who were with us at the very beginning remember the chaos of setting up our freshman congressional office. They recall a moment of endless opportunities and seemingly endless challenges, requiring patience, discipline, and immense attention to detail.

As my staff will tell you, Mela dove into the role of chief—adding additional team members, implementing processes, and getting our office up and running in order to serve the folks who call Michigan's 8th district home.

When staff needed decisive action without a moment's hesitation, they attest that Mela was always there to execute. When staff in the district office and the D.C. office needed to circle up and hash out a way forward, Mela was instrumental in facilitating the conversation. And when our partners back home needed a reliable partner in dealing with the office, they praised Mela for building relationships that still bear fruit to this day.

For the younger members of my staff, particularly the younger women, they've learned from Mela by seeing her operate up close. On too many occasions to count, they saw her think, both on her feet and outside the box, in order to make the impossible seem possible. They mention her mentorship and professional development as instrumental in giving them the confidence to assert themselves in the workplace.

My staff also appreciated Mela's unique ability to jump in—at any level—to help the team. In three years, she guided our team through an impeachment inquiry, public town halls to explain the decision, a war powers resolution drafted in the wee hours of the night, an insurrection and a second impeachment. Every member of the staff remembers how Mela was in the trenches with them during every one of these key events.

When the COVID-19 pandemic turned congressional offices upside down last March, our office was able to nimbly adapt, thanks to Mela. One of our congressional fellows at the time appreciated how she spearheaded the transition from in-person work to telework in the span of a week, making sure that folks had the tools to do their jobs in order to avoid any drop-off in service to our constituents.

Lastly, my team has appreciated the culture of respect and cooperation that is instilled in every new addition to the team. More than one staffer talked about her metaphor of our office being in a boat—with each member rowing as hard as they can in the same direction. With Mela at the helm, we've been able to accomplish this in spades.

No tribute to Mela would be complete without mentioning her husband, Kurt. In the military, there is a tradition of honoring a retiring member's service as well as their family's sacrifice. To Kurt, who well understands this sentiment as an active duty service member in the U.S. Navy himself, I want to extend my deepest gratitude for his willingness to support Mela when we had an early morning prep session or a late night mark-up.

Madam Speaker, to say that Mela Louise Norman will be missed is an enormous understatement. Her record speaks for itself.

In the days and weeks ahead, I have no doubt that our team will be putting out the latest fire or handling the next crisis with the question: "What would Mela do?"

In the meantime, we wish her all the best as she returns to her old stomping grounds at the Pentagon. On behalf of a grateful district and a grateful team, I thank Mela.

HONORING TRINITY HOUSE OF PRAYER CHURCH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 14, 2021

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable church, Trinity House of Prayer Church.

The Trinity House of Prayer Church is inspired by God and initiated by the Man of God, to win souls for the Kingdom, to bring salvation, healing, and deliverance, to God's people, also, to carry the gospel to the lost sheep, and to create unity among God's people of all denominations.

In February of 1974, Bishop and First Lady Knighten, along with their children, moved back to Mississippi under the inspiration of God. Bishop organized the Christian Fellowship Mission so that different denominations could come together in fellowship. Many followers had no church home. They asked Bishop Knighten to organize a church so they could join. In 1977, he organized the Trinity House of Prayer Church, in a building that he rented to set up a business. The first service was held on Sunday, December 10, 1977, with Bishop Knighten delivering the opening sermon.

As the ministry was growing, several churches derived from Trinity Ministries. So, Trinity House of Prayer of Moorhead became the Mother Church. Still the membership grew at the Mother Church to where a bigger church was needed. A stretch of land on the west end of town was prayed over and claimed by some of the church members. God answered their prayers and the land became property of the Trinity House of Prayer Ministries. After hiring someone to lay the foundation and frame up the building, the saints rolled up their sleeves and went to work. Their faithfulness was beyond measure. They worked many long hours and far over in the

night, to complete their new church home. Today, they sit in what resulted from the faithfulness and hard work of the saints, the mother church of the Trinity House of Prayer Ministries.

God has blessed the Trinity Ministry for years. Many people from all walks of life have been inspired, saved and loved by this ministry that God has entrusted to Bishop Knighten. Even though many people have passed through the ministry and some churches have left, God is still blessing the Trinity House of Prayer Ministry. The purpose of the Trinity Ministry is to allow God to manifest the vision which he has placed on this part of His body. The harvest is white, and the labors are few. Now is the time to do what God has commissioned Bishop Knighten to "gather God's people together unto Him; those that have made a covenant with God by sacrifice."

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Trinity House of Prayer Church for its longevity and dedication to serving others.

CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, CO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 14, 2021

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today, to recognize the City of Wheat Ridge, Colorado for being recognized as an All-American City for 2021, awarded by the National Civic League.

The theme for 2021, "Building Equitable and Resilient Communities", focused on recognizing communities that have worked to improve broad-based economic prosperity while also adapting and evolving during a challenging time.

Incorporated in 1969, Wheat Ridge has evolved from a quiet city to a bustling suburb while finding ways to honor its roots and its unique character and improving quality of life for its residents. The city was awarded based on three programs that highlighted the city's work to increase equity and resiliency.

The "Wheaties Academy", a leadership program developed to expand and diversify the civic voice within the community, has successfully engaged a wide array of community members and reflected the actual diversity of the city. Secondly, the creation of "Sustainable Wheat Ridge", an environmental stewardship program, worked to prioritize a vision for the city as outlined in the city's long-term strategic plan. Comprised of 11 resident volunteers, the committee dedicated over 550 hours to complete the action plan which was approved and funded by the city. Lastly, the "Wheat Ridge Together" initiative is a collaborative effort to respond to the dual challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and racial justice issues within the community. Wheat Ridge was well-positioned to face the challenges of the pandemic due to two new virtual public engagement tools that were launched prior to the pandemic: What's Up Wheat Ridge and Wheat Ridge Speaks, both of which provided on line opportunities for the community to engage with the city and provide public comment on city business. Wheat Ridge Speaks hosted 54 virtual meetings in 2020 and 166 comments were submitted electronically.